

LIFE.

lyfes, lyvis, -ys, 4-6 -es, 5 -ez, lyfes, 6 liffis.
Dut. sing. 1 life, 2-5 live, 3 liwe, 4-5 lyve; see
 also ALIVE. *Plural.* 4.)
 lifes, 5 lywes, liffis, ly
 lieves, 4- lives. [O.E.
 to Ofris. *lif* neut., life, pi
 life, person (MDu. *lif* li
 OHG. *līb* masc. and neut.
līb-masc, life, body, n
 ON. *lif* neut., life, occas
 life, body) :—O.Fent. **li*
 whence LIVE *v.*, O.E. *beli*
 the ablativ-var. **līb*-ap
 general meaning of the
līb-) is 'to continue, last
 persistent.1

Kids Philosophy SLAM

The topic for the 2012 Kids Philosophy Slam was
"What is the meaning of life?"
 In addition to the work presented here, we also want to
 highlight that Bethpage High School in Bethpage, New York,
 was named the most philosophical school in America.

PAGE TWO OF DEFINITION OF "LIFE" ■ OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY, 1933 EDITION

MOST PHILOSOPHICAL KINDERGARTENER
Nately Almodovar, Illinois



Life means to share and care.

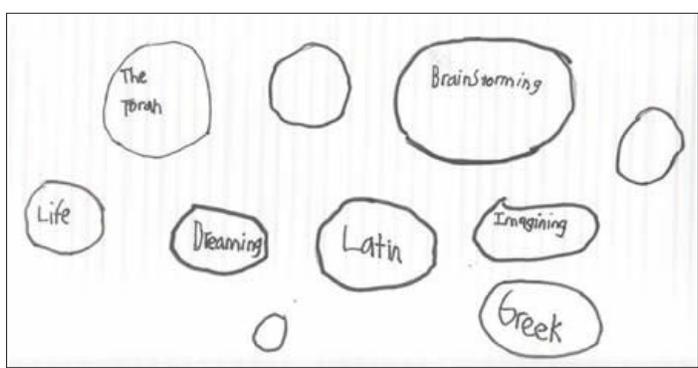
MOST PHILOSOPHICAL FIRST GRADER
Hunter Cook, New York



The most important thing for a happy life is friends.

MOST PHILOSOPHICAL SECOND GRADER
Nathaniel Nokken, Texas.

What is the meaning of life is a philosophical question. My meaning of life comes from understanding paradoxes, wondering about philosophy, being skeptical about science, brainstorming to have original ideas and sharing them with smart people. My meaning of life comes from studying history, science, Latin, Greek, and the Torah. It comes from reading, using the scientific method, asking questions and imagining and dreaming.

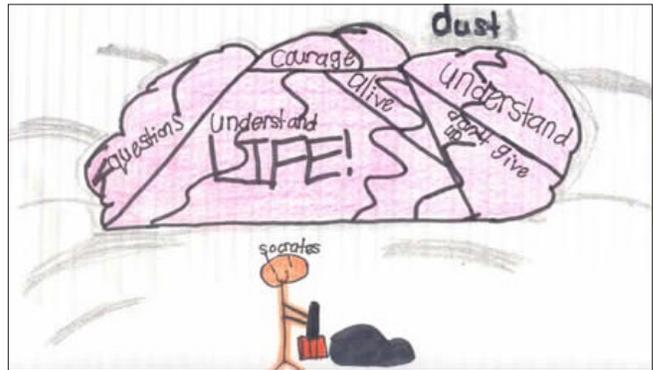


The prompt for this year's Philosophy Slam, instructions for submitting, and more can be found on the web: philosophyslam.org

MOST PHILOSOPHICAL THIRD GRADER

Keeva Weeks, Texas

The meaning of life is to be creative, to ask questions like Socrates, and to not give up on yourself or your friends. To understand the meaning of life you need to understand life. It is to be alive, to not have a dusty mind, and to not be afraid of your dreams. The meaning of life is simply the meaning of life.



MOST PHILOSOPHICAL FOURTH GRADER

Adyson Alexander, Texas

The dictionary definition of life: “Life—the quality that distinguishes living organisms from dead organisms and intimate matter, manifested in functions such as metabolism, growth reproduction, and response to stimuli.”

A few philosophers and scientists named Descartes, Hume, Socrates, Galileo, and Albert Einstein all have something in common: they all are curious! So I personally think that the meaning of life to these people is being curious. Everybody is curious. No matter if your question has to do with only one subject! Questions could be “Why does the Earth move?” or “Is my existence true?” There are a lot of questions in the world so the meaning of life to philosophers and other people is curiosity!!

MOST PHILOSOPHICAL FIFTH GRADER

Andrew Tai, New York

Throughout history many great philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Edmund Burke, and Epicurus have thought about the meaning of life. In order to answer this question, people usually seek an education. Plato, Aristotle, and Edmund Burke believed that education was the key to an accomplished life. Obtaining the most knowledge during one’s lifetime promotes happiness, ensures a better life for future generations, and allows individuals to discover the meaning of life. The meaning of life is to absorb the most knowledge in the time given to ensure that future generations will prosper.

The pursuit of an education is fundamental in people’s lives because it enables them to study all academic areas and to learn how to solve problems. Additionally, education provides socialization so people learn how to interact well with others. Plato believed that the intellectuals should rule society because he felt they would make better choices. He referred to individuals as “philosopher kinds” because of their intelligence. He opened an Academy, which became the first college to provide schooling to society. Plato, a Greek philosopher, believed, “by maintaining a sound system of education you produce citizens of good character and citizens of sound character, with the advantage of a good education, parents produce still better children in their turn.” He stressed education was essential for life and for future generations. Education is important, and is helping newer generations to live better lives than their parents.

Most parents desire that their children will have a better life than they had, so they work extremely hard to give their

children as much as possible. Parents accomplish this by passing on their knowledge and fortune to their children as a way to ensure their children’s success in life. Edmund Burke, a Greek philosopher, believed that society developed over a long time and that people accumulated experience and knowledge along the way. Burke remarked, “Each generation needs to regard itself not as owning the assets of society but as taking care of them.” It is very important to foster the development and education of children to improve their quality of life. Some people do not think the same way.

It can be argued that education isn’t the to the meaning of life. The Epicureans believed that the most important thing in life is happiness. Epicurus, a Greek philosopher, boasted that, “What is good is what is pleasure.” He would suggest that it is not important to work hard in school and that it is more vital to have fun. But, if people do not work hard in school, they will not attend a credible college and gain knowledge. Without knowledge, obtaining a job and money can be difficult. Knowledge provides comfort and meaning to life.

The meaning of life is to collect the most wisdom to ensure that future generations will thrive. Absorbing the most knowledge will bring happiness to the next generation. Plato stressed that education was essential for life and for future generations. Aristotle believed everyone crave knowledge. Edmund Burke thought that people passed on knowledge and then was used to develop society. Famous Greek philosopher, Aristotle, stated that, “All men by nature desire knowledge.” This knowledge ensures that the next generation will be successful.

MOST PHILOSOPHICAL SIXTH GRADER

Joann Song, Illinois

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A question that has made even great philosophers ponder is now being overlooked by people now. This question has been overlooked by many people because they do not think that this question is as important as making academic achievements. The question, what is the meaning of life, has been asked from the beginning of time and does not have an answer that will satisfy everyone. What would actually be the meaning of life? Life is like a road that unravels as you go on, not revealing itself before it has happened. Many people consider this road as being happy, achieving dreams, or living for others.

Life is defined as enjoyable to many people. Aristotle's, a Greek philosopher and polymath, greatest influential work was the Nichomachean Ethics. The question that he seeks in his lectures is what is the purpose of human existence. Aristotle said, "Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence." This showed that he thought purpose in life was happiness. In modern days, happiness is just a state of mind when one. However, Aristotle thought life was actually at its peak of happiness when a person's life is over and you know if you lived up to a human being's full potential. In a survey on the meaning of life, mainly people said that life was about being happy. This means that you should enjoy life even the things that don't go your way.

Many would also agree that life is about making dreams and having them come true. Henry David Thoreau said, "If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them." This meant that if you dream about what you want it won't disappear. Now, if you put your mind to that dream, it can be achieved. Thoreau agreed that life should be about achieving dreams and making new ones. Also, it would be about not giving up

on the dreams. In addition, one of my friends said that life was about making dreams. Also, what you do mostly in life is achieve dreams.

Is living for others a burden or happiness? Einstein explained, "Only a life lived in the service to others is worth living." This meant that philanthropy is not a burden. Einstein means that living for others is better because it gives a person a reason to live. He would think about this as life. In addition, this is a goal which people make, but have a hard time completing.

In conclusion, the life is about being happy. For example, life starts and ends without anyone's intentions, but rolls on where someone is headed. This means that life can be shaped the way you want. Life is like a road that unveils itself as you go on with life, but you should be jubilant even though things don't go your way.

**MARY FELKER AWARD
FOR THE MOST ARTISTIC ENTRY.**

Natalie Mendoza, Minnesota



MOST PHILOSOPHICAL SEVENTH GRADER

Morgan Lemner, Minnesota

Confucius once said, “Life is really simple but we insist on making it complicated.” Showing that we all put forth a meaning in this world. As humans we keep looking for this one meaning for our lives, and we insist that we all have the same meaning. We’re really just making our lives complicated. I believe that our meaning is simple; each person must take their own journey to find his or her own meaning.

It was July 4, 2009; I was at Valleyfair watching the fireworks blaring in the sky. Everything was great about that night, except when my mom got a phone call. My dad was currently in hospice and wasn’t doing well at all. She had then told us he was in a lot of pain and that he wanted to be taken off of his life support. Right then I could barely breathe it was like I was regretting every moment I didn’t spend with him and all the times I didn’t listen to him. I then realized that life is ever so precious. How could something as simple as having fun turn into something as serious as death? Tomorrow I would be going to see him for the last time.

It was July 5, 2009; I was at my dad’s hospice care center. I went into his room to say my last goodbye. They had given him medicine to put him under so he wouldn’t be in pain. I remember just looking at him not knowing what to say. Then I heard a very quiet “I will always love even when I’m gone” coming from his mouth. I burst out in tears. You never know what you’ve got till it’s gone. If I could rewind time I would, to before he was sick. Time is ever so precious and our lives even more.

It was then that very night at 10:50 p.m. I watched my dad take his very last breath. Then I walked over to him kissed his forehead and walked out of the room never looking back. I ran into a chair and cried for about an hour till I was forced to leave. That night had to have been the most painful night of my life. Family is not the biggest part of my life. Right then that night I knew I found my meaning; to live every breath to the fullest and never regret any of them.

Sometimes I wonder if my dad ever found his meaning of life. I would want that for him. In a way I was fortunate to have that experience because it made me give a hard look at my life. I’ve found my meaning of life. The journey may have been complicated. However, the meaning, once I was willing to accept it, was simple to find.

MOST PHILOSOPHICAL EIGHTH GRADER WINNER OF THE ROBERT P. FELKER AWARD FOR THE MOST POETIC ESSAY

Cherry Tomatsu, Missouri

The Butterfly Teaches the Meaning of Life

I sit pondering
the meaning of
life.

A Monarch glides through
the vibrant garden to
gather nectar.

Nourished.

The peaceful
creature drifts on
to sprinkle pollen
into the
bursting
magenta collection
of verbenas.

Pollinated.

Swooping.
Constantly fluttering.
Joined by others,
movement more
brilliant.

With stamen.
With pistol.

Entering the floral world.
With a different
beating pattern.

Opposite and symmetrical.

One moving.
One rooted.
Cultivating.

Beginning as seeds.
The seeds of life.

Meant to flourish.
Life is full of seeds.

Traveling to the
next generation,
and the next,
and the
next.

A never ending circle of nature.

We look at the intertwining
of the black and orange.

We look.
We remember.
We become motivated
to live.

Live and spread.

The nectar-nourished
pollen delivered into
our minds.

Cultivate
the meaning of life
in the garden
of your mind.

